

Couples In Bloom – A Bow and a Bow

November 2010

A **bow** [bo]: a knot with loops, as a ribbon on a gift, and a **bow** [bou]: to bend the head, knee, etc. as in reverence, service. A bow and a bow: a gift and a servant. As we enter this season of Thanksgiving and getting, we think of Jesus Christ, the greatest gift. What qualifies Him for that title? He gave Himself to serve those who should have been serving Him. The first one to give **produces** goodness; those who give afterward **copy** it.

The best gift (i.e. the **bow** [bo]) **serves and ministers to another** (i.e. the **bow** [bou]), **especially if the recipient does not deserve such ministry**. If we want to give a quality gift this season, we can minister beyond the recipient's worthiness, as Jesus did for us. He did it **for the joy it would produce** ⇒ **Hebrews 12:2**. Our motivation needs to be *love*.

What might this mean in a marriage? **We were upset with each other** the Saturday before last. We talked it through and realized self-focus fed the conflict, even though our intent was to bless each other, not argue! We had to **look to Jesus for our answer**: with us, He “despised (*didn't focus on*) the shame” and “endured the cross” (*paid the price*).

What does “giving the best” or “going all the way” mean to you? If we stop and think, “*best*” needs to relate to the *recipient*, not to the giver. If we stop and think further, *servanthood* is the only way to such success. The classic “*win-win*” situation means both parties receive goodness, which means *we* are the one who *must* minister to the other. Jesus Christ asked God for permission to *not* die for our sins ⇒ Matthew 26:39 & 42, but *did* do it for two reasons: **for the joy it would produce** and in submission to God's will.

It's your turn: **transform your next marital argument into marital improvement.** How? By **looking to Jesus for your answer**, the “*win-win*” answer. Here is an example:

Spouse to spouse: “**Before we work through this problem, know that nothing will separate us from God's love, including this problem. I would rather be wronged than divided. We can solve this Jesus-style: your need is my priority. So: what do you need? I really want to serve you and I look forward to the joy it will produce between us.**”

The spouse who does this first puts a big smile on God's face. God then crushes the devil under their feet ⇒ Romans 16:20. They also live out the Scripture, “follow me as I follow Christ” ⇒ 1 Corinthians 11:1. This is a “*win-win*” move that has *power*. It is giving your spouse a **bow** [bo] (the gift of grace) and a **bow** [bou] (serving as Christ did).

As we **look to Jesus for our answer**, we see that signs and wonders *followed* Him and his disciples ⇒ Mark 16:20, though it is evil to *ask* for them ⇒ Matthew 16:4. How do we get the *power* of God to follow our *marriage*? Not by seeking the power, but rather by seeking the *person*; namely: our spouse. God empowers those who follow Him: his signs and wonders follow those who follow Him. Likewise in marriage (which He made), God honors marriages with power whose partners follow- and minister to- each *other*.

Look at the joy servanthood sets before you. BE the gift this season. Minister to God in ways you never have before... *ever*. Minister to your spouse in ways you never have before... *ever*. **BE** the source of thanksgiving and **BE** the source of getting. All you need is **a bow and a bow: BE** the gift and **BE** the servant. ♥ Loren & Kathy Falzone